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# NEWS

## SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

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### Foster Homes Could Help Make New Year Happier for Some Children



**THREE-YEAR-OLD** Jason is awaiting Christmas and the new year in his foster home in Deer Lodge.

Foster homes for developmentally disabled (DD) children are "desperately needed" in Lewis and Clark and Yellowstone Counties, pleads Marge Rankin, director of a project to place DD children.

The project is being operated by the Rehabilitative Services Division of Montana Social and Rehabilitation Services.

Currently, says Mrs. Rankin,

there are several children in Boulder River School and Hospital who are ready for placement in foster homes. Others already have been moved into homes.

Jason, three years old, is one of the children most recently taken into a foster home. His foster mother, Beverly Niles, is a 27-year-old single parent. She and Jason live in Deer Lodge.

Jason, according to Mrs. Rankin, was housed in Boulder but was not getting the attention he needed to be able to develop as fully as he is able. "We knew he was capable of doing more," she says, "but he just refused to do it."

Already, with the special care and attention of his foster mother and his new friends in Deer Lodge, Jason has not disappointed his foster mom and Mrs. Rankin. During the first ten days of his stay in his new home he mastered self-feeding and learned to thoroughly chew his food. While in Boulder, says Mrs. Rankin, Jason was given nothing but pureed foods so he had never learned to chew.

The next step for the little tyke will be a complete medical examination. "We plan to use medical services both in and out of state to find out exactly all that's wrong," Mrs. Rankin says. Jason may be having seizure action, for one thing, which had gone undetected until his foster mother, able to spend a lot of time with him, noticed slight "blank out" periods.

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930 East Lyndale Avenue  
Helena, Montana 59601  
(Cont. on page 7)



*Helena, Montana  
Christmas 1974*

*It Doesn't Have to  
Be Christmas . . .*

*. . . for us to think of our good friends.*

*But the Yuletide does give us an opportunity to pause  
and express our appreciation for the many courtesies and  
considerations which have been shown us during the year.*

*1974 has been a hectic year. It's been a year we will  
all remember. But we look forward to the challenges  
and opportunities which the New Year will bring and  
hope that it will be a very happy and prosperous one.*

*May you have a bountiful Christmas—rich in warm  
friendships and may 1975 be overflowing with all  
the good things of life for you and yours.*

*Sincerely,*

*Theodore Carkulis*

**SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES**  
*Theodore Carkulis, Director*

# Back-Due Support Is Ordered Paid To SRS Agency

A \$4,900 settlement for back-due child support has been ordered turned over to the Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services by a judgement entered November 25 by District Judge Jack Shantstrom of Livingston.

The money had been held by the Park County (Montana) clerk of court since a legal settlement this fall. In that settlement, Paul Hultgren of Park County, Wyoming paid his former wife, who resides in Livingston, \$4,900 of a total of \$6,650 for 19 months of back-due support.

In February of 1972, Hultgren and his wife were divorced and Hultgren agreed to pay \$50 a month towards the support of each of their seven children. The payments were never made and in May of 1973, proceedings were begun to recover the unpaid support.

During the time the father's support was lacking, SRS helped maintain the family through its program of Aid to Dependent Children (ADC).

The money paid by Hultgren in settlement was held by the clerk of court until it could be determined whether SRS had rights to the settlement in return for ADC payments made during the period in which the father's support obligations were not fulfilled. It was decided that SRS was the lawful recipient of the money.

(Cont. on page 16)

# *Two SRS Employees Win Achievement Awards*



JACK CARVER, SRS associate director for coordinated services, accepts the Dr. Louis Allard Award from Ben Webinger, president, Montana Association for Rehabilitation.

Jack Carver, associate director for coordinated services, Montana Social and Rehabilitation Services, was one of five recipients of achievement awards presented during the rehabilitation, speech and hearing conference in Bozeman in October.

Other awards were given to Dr. Robert P. Yost, medical director, Missoula Crippled Children and Adults Rehabilitation Center, the Achievement Award; Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, the President's Award; Billings Adult Education Program, the Organizational Award, and Rita Solem, rehabilitation counselor, Montana Rehabilitative Services, Bozeman, Counselor of the Year.

The conference was sponsored by the Montana Medical Education and Research Foundation, the Montana Speech and Hear-

ing Association, the Montana Association for Rehabilitation, the Montana Easter Seal Society and the Mountain States Regional Medical Program.

Carver, who won the Dr. Louis Allard Award, was active in the founding of the Montana Association for Rehabilitation. He has devoted the greatest share of his working life to the handicapped for nine years. Carver was administrator of the state's vocational rehabilitation agency. Under his direction the professional counselor staff was increased from 10 to 33 and 12 aides, and high school work-study programs grew from 2 to 25. He also was instrumental in the development of the state's two rehabilitation facilities. Carver recently was promoted to associate director in charge of

(Cont. on page 5)

# Ennis Becomes Learning Site For MACCY

"What's the Scene in Ennis?" was discovered by members of the Montana Advisory Council on Children and Youth (MACCY) as they held their quarterly meeting there December 6, 7 and 8.

The 48 MACCY members and their guests zeroed in on local government review and on one of Montana's Towns of Tomorrow as they studied "assets and liabilities" of this rural community. They are taking home what they learned in Ennis to apply to their own communities.

As the result of Montana's 1972 Constitutional Convention, the state is required to periodically review its forms of local government and give its citizens a chance to select an alternative form. This applies to all incorporated towns, cities and counties. Montanans now, through local government study commissions, are reviewing the existing forms and developing new ideas. Montanans will vote in 1976, the year of the nation's bicentennial, on whether to keep their present form of local government or to select an alternative.

The Towns of Tomorrow—Ennis, Plentywood, Boulder and Red Lodge—were selected by the Governor because they have demonstrated a strong, active will for improvement of their

rural communities. The citizens of these towns may submit proposals for improvements to state officials who will attempt to locate state and federal funds for them.

MACCY's part in these two projects is to encourage young people to become involved in both projects to make known the needs and wants of Montana's children, youth and families.

Ennis was selected as a project example. MACCY members met with civic leaders and citizens of the community and the surrounding area. MACCY members learned about the areas in which the citizens of Ennis and the surrounding communities feel they are lacking. They became acquainted with the high spots as well.

MACCY members talked with the local government study commissions to discover their plans for reviewing the present government forms and soliciting citizen participation in the process.

Through their meeting in Ennis, MACCY members gathered ideas to take home to encourage and to help their friends and neighbors take part in these two processes.

With the citizens of Ennis and the surrounding areas, MACCY became acquainted with shortcomings, sufficiencies, assets, ideas and future plans in the areas of education, health, social and public services; recreation facilities and opportunities; the law enforcement and justice systems; cultural opportunities; possibilities for social experiences; the nurturing of children, including parental needs; employment availabilities and opportunities, and leadership development resources.

# Food Stamps Eligibility Rule For Students

Students who receive more than half of their support from a household which is ineligible for the food stamp program would also be ineligible for food stamps under a regulation published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The rule applies to any student, age 18 or over, who attends an educational institution beyond high school and is claimed as a tax dependent by an ineligible household. Other members of the student's household can receive food stamps if otherwise eligible. The student is granted the opportunity to prove that he does not receive more than half his support from an ineligible household.

This regulation became effective November 4.

*The SRS News staff needs help with its mailing list. We know that some subscribers are inadvertently getting two copies. Also, many copies go to the last known address of persons now deceased. If you are getting two copies, or know of copies going to waste because they are mailed to deceased persons, would you let us know? Please include the mailing labels if possible when requesting changes of address, or termination of subscription.*

# Report Beneficiary Changes

## VA Reminds All Veterans

Make certain the "right person" is beneficiary on your GI insurance policy.

That is the Veterans Administration reminder to five million veterans covered under its government life insurance program.

Otherwise, you may add to emotional stress of survivors when it is discovered the intended beneficiary was not named on the policy, explains VA.

VA is obligated to pay insurance proceeds to the beneficiary of record. Most of the agency's insured are World War II veterans who carry National Service Life Insurance.

The problem of insurance benefits going to an unintended recipient arises in most instances because the veteran simply never gets around to changing his

beneficiary, says VA.

In a typical case, a veteran named his mother as beneficiary when he first took out his policy. When he married he forgot to notify VA that he wished to change his beneficiary. Besides emotional stress, his death resulted in unwarranted financial hardship for his widow and young children — Hardships which may have been alleviated had the name of the beneficiary been changed.

VA urges any veteran who wishes to change his beneficiary to contact the VA insurance center to which he pays his premiums—either in Philadelphia or St. Paul. Be sure to provide as much information as possible, including policy number, full name and address, advises VA.

forms of communication. Floyd McDowell, the school's administrator, accepted the award.

The Adult Basic Education Program in Billings, directed by Ben Fallon, provides individualized instruction to handicapped people wishing to upgrade their basic educational skills or to learn new ones according to their basic abilities. Students are taught reading, mathematics, English, social studies and consumer education. Individualized and specialized courses have been tailored to the needs of the particular students.

Ms. Solem of Bozeman was selected outstanding counselor for providing quality services and attention to vocational rehabilitation clients to assist them in achieving independence and self-fulfillment.

# Awards

(Cont. from page 3)

coordinated services for SRS. He also supervises the Field Services Division.

Dr. Yost is a practicing physician at the Rehabilitation Center in Missoula. In addition to his own duties he supervises medical teams, including psychologists and therapists, that examine and evaluate industrially injured persons and amputees. He initiated a Pain Clinic at the center and helped set up a pain clinic team to diagnose and treat persons who suffer long periods of pain due to injury. He

also was instrumental in establishing the Center's Upper Extremity Clinic.

The Montana School for the Deaf and Blind is a live-in facility for deaf and blind children. Its receipt of the President's Award came as a result, in particular, of services for the deaf. The school uses a total communication concept involving sign language, finger spelling, audio-visual methods, speech and lip reading with equal importance placed on each and with each used both in the classroom and in the dormitory. This method is employed to give deaf children exposure to all



**JACK HUTCHISON, Ph. D.,** director of rehabilitation, Goodwill Industries of America, Wash., D.C., was guest speaker at the MAR awards banquet.

## To the Senior Citizens of Montana

### 55 YEARS AND OLDER

There's a "Wonderful World of Services" available to you by simply dialing the Office of the Citizens Advocate of Montana . . .

**1-800-332-2272**

#### IN THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Your call, if a problem of the aged, will then ring "Aging Services". Call anytime day or night. (Between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. the following morning your inquiry will be taped and will receive prompt attention when the office opens.)

#### This is a Model Project of the SRS Montana Aging Services Bureau.

And through federal funding it will be available to the Senior Citizens of Montana between September 30, 1974 and September 30, 1975.

Inquiries and requests will be passed on from the Aging Services Bureau to six area offices located in:

#### HELENA • CONRAD • KALISPELL ANACONDA • ROUNDUP • GLENDALE

It must be remembered that the Citizens Advocate and the Montana Aging services Bureau do not finally resolve the problem or inquiry, but through their facilities and referral, will bring them to the attention of the agency or authorities charged with taking the necessary steps. Here are a few problems and areas in which senior citizens may have questions:

- Late social security checks • Late or incorrect welfare checks • Food Stamps • Medicare • Home health aid • Transportation programs • Health screening • Problems of isolation (Is there anything I can do in my community?) • Shopping assistance • Need of medical attention • Doesn't understand the new rules • Just lonely and wants to visit with someone • Activities going on in his or her area in which senior citizens can help or participate?

Montana Aging Services Bureau "carries the ball" and gets a complete run-down of the problem. Then the caller is informed of who to see for final solution. To get the "wheels in motion", Aging Services also calls the appropriate county, state or federal agency or district office. A specially trained technician follows through to determine if the problem has actually been resolved. All of this will be handled in a period of seven days or less. Sounds rather sophisticated, but it will work.

Finally, the SRS Montana Aging Services Bureau will be in contact with the Governor's Office on any major problems and will inform that office each week of the number of calls and the problems disposed of . . . in other words, no one will be "left out in the cold".

It may come as a surprise to many that there are more than 100,000 persons in Montana 55 years or older—one-seventh of the population—who receive the **4th largest income in the State**. They receive approximately \$132,000,000 each year in pensions, social security and other retirement sources.

Also in Centralized Services, an Audit Unit has been set up with Mack Simpson as auditor-in-charge. Ron Brown has returned from the Department of Administration to become administrator of the Centralized Services Division.

Several changes have come about in the Community Services Division. The Children and Youth Programs Unit has merged with the Youth Development Bureau. The Child Welfare Services and the Family and Adult Services Bureaus have been consolidated and re-named the Social Services Bureau. Norma Cutone is chief and Pete Surdock is assistant chief. The 4 C's Unit has been incorporated into the Social Services Bureau.

In the Economic Assistance Division, the Food Supplement Unit has been transferred to the Eligibility Determination Bureau. Edith Svingen has become supervisor of that unit.

Ben Johns, who had been administrator of Centralized Services, has been promoted to associate director for financial management. He is responsible for the Legal Unit, the Information-Education Unit and all matters relating to the department's budget.

Jack Carver has been promoted to associate director for program coordination of all department activities and programs at the state and local levels. He will continue to supervise the Field Services Division.

Frank Smoyer has been named special assistant in charge of management systems. He is responsible for development and coordination of SRS computer based systems for eligibility. (Cont. on page 7)

## Organizational Changes are Undertaken at SRS

A number of recent organizational changes have taken place in SRS.

In the Centralized Services Division, a Data Processing Bureau has been established

with A.A. "Curly" London as chief. The Budget and Management Bureau has been dissolved and Neil Sanders, who was bureau chief, has become the cost control officer.

## CHANGES

(Cont. from page 6)

medical payments, accounting and, in the near future, for social services and vocational rehabilita-

tation. He is the liaison between SRS and other state, federal and private agencies with which the SRS computer systems must coordinate.

## Field Services Division Is Helping Coordinate State's Human Services

In an effort to better assess and cover the needs of Montanans, the Field Services Division of Social and Rehabilitation Services was created early this year.

In the words of the division's supervisor, Jack Carver, "There was a real feeling that programs on the local-regional level needed to be coordinated to provide better human services to people of Montana."

Each of the state's five regions has a field representative. They are: Boyce Fowler, Billings; John Konecny, Miles City; Laulette Hansen, Great Falls; Don Lee, Helena, and Gary Walsh, Missoula.

Field Services is concerned with human development including rehabilitation services; community services incorporating child welfare, day care, youth development, family and adult services and aging services; services to the developmentally disabled; visual services; legal services; medical assistance, and welfare.

Since the conception of the regional set-up, says Carver, the field representatives have been responsible for such things as: the establishment of food stamp programs in some counties, the combining of welfare programs between some counties, better understanding and cooperation between SRS staff employees in

the field and other agencies, and the inauguration of new programs such as the West Yellowstone Human Services Coordination Program which is helping to locate and secure human resources for this resort town and the surrounding area.

As Carver explains, the Field Services Division exists primarily for other agencies. It aims to assist inter-action and communication between SRS and other agencies in order to try to avoid duplication of energies and to make available to Montanans top quality human services.

Carver adds that citizens' expressions of needs, suggestions, complaints are welcomed by the field representatives. They will direct these persons to the proper program if the need be, or, if no program exists to fill a need, they will look into the possibilities of creating one.

SRS reminds its readers that if you are in need of a service—be it anything from marriage counseling, to obtaining an artificial limb, to learning how to adjust to blindness, to learning proper nutrition—you also can contact your local county welfare office. Social workers there, who work in conjunction with the regional representatives, are familiar with most of the services in and near all Montana communities, including social services and public assistance

programs. You do not have to be on welfare or an applicant for welfare to use many of the programs available through county welfare departments—the local arms of Social and Rehabilitation Services in Helena.

## DD Children Need Homes

(Cont. from page 1)

After his medical condition is thoroughly evaluated, Jason will begin to concentrate on ambulation and language development.

Jason's foster mother now is coaching him on preambulatory reflexes such as learning to catch himself when he starts to fall. Since Jason has spent most of his life confined to a crib, he has to know he can catch himself before he will try to walk, Mrs. Rankin explains.

Ms. Niles' background is expected to be a definite plus toward Jason's development. She has a master's degree in special education and a background in nursing. She has worked with handicapped children, especially those with Downs Syndrome, like Jason. This is a genetic defect which causes mental retardation and certain physical characteristics peculiar to Downs.

Ms. Niles currently is a member of the regional resource team in Deer Lodge. Sometimes Jason goes to work with his foster mom, so he does not lack the care, attention and education so important to the growth and development of this little child. When he doesn't go, he stays with a babysitter who also has been trained to work with handicapped children.

(Cont. on page 12)

# Foster Grandparents Find L



Photo by  
Harley Hettick

"It gives me something to get up in the morning for," responded one foster grandparent when asked what was the most important benefit received from participating in the Foster Grandparent Program.

A survey conducted by program director Becky Hubbert, Aging Services Bureau, Montana Social and Rehabilitation Services, found that most of Montana's foster grandparents felt a satisfying mutual exchange of benefits between the grandparents, the children and their teachers. Thirty-two of the forty foster grandparents responded.

"I really feel I helped one little girl with her speech," enthused another respondent. "I helped several to learn to tie their shoes. I didn't know it was so hard to learn to tie a shoe!"

Said another, "For what amounted to about six months of work, I believe good progress was made . . . progress in the volume of work was evident . . . Facial expressions were improved and actions changed for the better . . . friendliness and co-operation developed . . . expressions of love and kindness were exchanged."

Most who answered the ques-

tionnaire put to them by Mrs. Hubbert were thrilled with having seen their "grandchildren" develop. They watched the children take an interest in schoolwork because the grandparents were there to help teachers give the children more individual attention in difficult areas. They watched the children's attitudes toward the foster grandparents change from wariness to affection. And most of them - children, grandparents and teachers - felt a "genuine regret at parting" when the school year ended.

The Foster Grandparent Program provides part-time volunteer opportunities for low-income

*A MISSOULA Foster Grandmother has a tip on using scissors.*



*A MISSOULA Foster Grandfather a project is more fun with four hands.*

# Love, Health and Satisfaction

persons 60 years of age and older. The grandparents are given a stipend of \$1.60 an hour to supplement their social security. Foster Grandparents is administered by Montana Social and Rehabilitation Services under a grant from ACTION, national umbrella agency for volunteer programs.

The grandparents work in schools, special education classes and day care centers in Billings, Great Falls and Missoula. They work in cooperation with the teachers and day care specialists, giving assistance and special attention and often simply just talking with and listening to the youngsters.

As the result of being a foster grandparent, one senior citizen observed, "The children took more pride in their work



*WEAVING goes a lot faster when your Foster Grandmother guides your yarn.*

*Photo by Great Falls Tribune*

(because someone was showing special interest in them). And I enjoyed noticing the improvements."

"I think by visiting with the children, along with helping them with their work, it helped the children to have more confidence in themselves," commented another.

Still another grandparent said, "When they need help with their lessons I'm right there. They know I am there to listen to all their problems and to hear about the good things that happen to them at home and at school."

Sadly, not all the things that happen are good, as another foster grandparent pointed out. But in such instances, a foster grandparent's watchful eye can prove to be a great help, perhaps even a lifesaver.



*this little boy finds a building*

*Photo by Harley Hettick*

The grandparent stressed: "When a student arrives, see if he is adequately dressed for the weather, if his face and hands are clean and his hair is combed. If he is sleepy or inattentive find out why in a friendly manner. Some of the reasons can be pretty horrible. Look for cuts, bruises, infections, limping, black eyes, rashes and colds. Notice squinting when reading or apparent deafness. Escort him to a nurse when advisable."

"Then you can get down to work with a willing student. Be patient . . ." this grandparent continued. "Praise him for improvement. This often is a great motivation for study."

More than half of the foster grandparents said that if their individual income were to

*(Cont. on page 10)*

# Foster Grandparents

(Cont. from page 9)

increase in the future over the program's standards, they would like to continue their work for no pay. Why? One woman summed up her feelings this way. "Sharing knowledge, kindness and friendship insures these qualities to last in my life span."

More than half of those participating in the program also said they felt their health had improved "a lot" since becoming a foster grandparent because:

"When you have something to do and get out, you don't have time to think of your own aches and pains."

"(The Foster Grandparent) Program has added zest to make living more interesting."

"I have enjoyed good health and a life of activity so switching to a schoolroom gave me an opportunity to use, at a new level, a lifetime of varied experiences with young people."

"I have something to do and so have a different outlook on life."

"I'm not as lonesome."

Of course, not all participants found being a foster grandparent a rewarding experience. One person, for instance, felt the program to be a strain on the nerves.

Asked what advice the foster grandparents would give a newcomer into the program, almost all the responses registered wholehearted enthusiasm. As one person said, "You don't know until you try it. I love it!"

For more information about the Foster Grandparent Program, write Beeky Hubbert,

director, Foster Grandparents Program, Montana Social and Rehabilitation Services, P. O. Box 1723, Helena, Mt. 59601.

**Toll - Free  
800-332-2272  
Citizens' Advocate**

## Man Finds New Career After Losing His Leg



*THE FACES of Louis Raining Bird and his students reflect their enjoyment in teaching and learning.*

Louis Raining Bird is a man who enjoys his work, and his enthusiasm is reciprocated.

Raining Bird is an educator at Rocky Boy School in Box Elder. He translates native Cree into English and teaches the Indian language to the elementary grade students.

A few years ago Raining Bird never thought of being a teacher. He raised cattle, but one day an injury on the ranch left him a paraplegic and later cost him his right leg. Even though confined to a wheelchair he continued to

work cattle until another accident.

Meanwhile Montana Rehabilitative Services was in touch with Raining Bird. Counselors discovered that he was bilingual and also that the Box Elder school system happened to be trying to initiate a program of teaching the native Indian language to the children.

Raining Bird's knowledge was put to work and, after training, he was hired as a teacher by the Rocky Boy school. In addition to  
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# Raining Bird

(Cont. from page 10)

his language classes he prepares all of the school's Cree lessons and other material.

Through the assistance of Rehabilitative Services, Raining Bird was able to receive the necessary teacher training to begin his new job. He was able to get a new wheelchair and also to

equip his car with hand controls in place of foot pedals. He had been using a long stick to drive his car.

Raining Bird's teaching has entirely replaced his work with cattle. In fact, now he says all he does is eat the beef. His new profession seems to have digested well. Both Raining Bird and the school system say they feel satisfied.



*RAINING BIRD uses the childrens' drawings to illustrate language lessons.*

## Ruth Stephenson Directs Custer County Welfare

Replaces Edith Huntzicker

Ruth Stephenson of Miles City has been named by county commissioners to head the Custer County Welfare Department and the Powder River welfare program.

Mrs. Stephenson has been a social worker in Miles City since 1958. She is a graduate of Missoula County High School

and the University of Montana.

Before joining Social and Rehabilitation Services, which at that time was the State Welfare Department, Mrs. Stephenson spent seven years as secretary of the Red Cross in Miles City.

She succeeds Edith Huntzicker who retired as county director August 1.

# Plans Are Laid For SRS Offices

General specifications have been laid out for the interior of SRS's new office building.

The plan now must be approved by the state architectural engineer. After that, it will go into the drawing stage of the entire building—inside and out.

Division administrators, bureau chiefs and the building committee met this summer with architect Ken R. Knight of Great Falls to prescribe the plan, which allows room for expansion of the department.

The 50,000 square-feet building will be four floors, including a semi-daylight basement. Machinery, maintenance and mail services will be in the basement, more than half of which will be exposed since the building site is on a sloped piece of ground.

A variation of the open-space concept in interior design will be employed. The director, the division administrators and the bureau chiefs will have private, enclosed offices. The other offices will be divided by movable partitions five to six feet high.

Included in the building will be an auditorium, a coffee room, a first aid room, an elevator to carry supplies and conference rooms on all floors. Parking will be provided for 125 cars.

Bids for a contractor have not yet been let, but May 15, 1975, is the tentative date for ground breaking.

The SRS building will be located directly east of the Mitchell Building at the Capital.

# DD Foster Children

(Cont. from page 7)

"This is Bev's first experience as a foster mother," notes Mrs. Rankin. "At first we had some reservations about a single parent. But we felt that perhaps most foster homes would tend to reinforce Jason's inactivity. He tends to smile and coo a lot when you do what he wants, but he's a real pill when you don't. Bev knows how to deal with these situations because of her training and experiences."

Other children have been placed in homes in Conrad and Belgrade and in another home in Deer Lodge. Final preparations are being made to move a nonambulatory youngster confined to a wheelchair to a foster home in Butte and another child to Columbia Falls.

A six-year-old boy in Belgrade was the first to be placed under the federally funded SRS project, and the initial adjustment was not an easy one, notes Mrs. Rankin.

The family that took this little boy has four children, one of which has Downs Syndrome.

Says Mrs. Rankin, "The first couple of weeks after his arrival provided perhaps the greatest test of strength for the family since their daughter (with Downs) was born. He was very, very active and demanded constant attention.

"I think the family had some misgivings, but by the end of the first week they had decided to deal with the problem," she continues. "They spent a long time teaching him the limits of the household—exactly what was acceptable and what was not. He learned that this was his



*SIX-YEAR-OLD Brett recently moved to Conrad with Diane and Jim Brauch. As their foster child, he became the first member of their family and, according to Diane, they've been learning parenting quickly under Brett's tutelage.*

home and he wasn't going to be sent away so he realized he didn't have to demand constant attention. (He had been in and out of Boulder several times.)"

He had been a member of his new family for only slightly more than a month when he more than doubled his verbal skills, Mrs. Rankin proudly states. He has begun using "lots of phrases and full sentences". And for Halloween he made a "Beautiful!" paper-mache jack-o-lantern.

He is enrolled in a trainable education class in Bozeman and will enter an integrated first grade next year in Belgrade with "normal" and "abnormal" children. Currently he is learning

about shapes and forms and how they fit together and also about how his community works. He has been praised by his teacher for the remarkable improvement he's made in his behavior.

Although accepting a DD foster child cannot possibly be an easy task, there seem to be great rewards in loving and receiving love from a little child and in giving the child a chance he wouldn't otherwise have to reach full potential.

"All the foster parents now are really enthusiastic about their kids," adds Mrs. Rankin.

Persons who think they may be interested in taking in a developmentally disabled foster child may obtain further information by inquiring at their local county welfare office or by writing Marge Rankin, Rehabilitative Services Division, Social and Rehabilitation Services, P.O. Box 1723, Helena, Mt. 59601.

## A NEW NAME A NEW LOOK

Social and Rehabilitation Services plans to change the format of its newspaper at the first of the year.

We expect to have a new name for our publication as well as a brand new look.

We also will experiment with a quarterly rather than bi-monthly publication.

All of you who now subscribe to the *SRS News* will automatically continue to receive the new paper. New subscribers will be welcomed. The paper is free of charge.

# Toll-Free Call Gives Families Peace of Mind

Operation Peace of Mind has begun in Montana, Gov. Thomas L. Judge announced recently.

POM, as it is called, is a service that relays messages from runaways to parents. The service is confidential and only the message requested by the youth will be relayed to the parents.

According to Gov. Judge, POM was set up in September 1973 by Texas Gov. Dolph Briscoe following discovery of mass slayings of 27 young boys, many of whom were hitchhikers and runaways.

Last year in Montana, says Gov. Judge, more than 1,000 court proceedings dealt with juveniles on the run.

To date, the Governor notes, POM has handled more than 3,000 calls from runaways and has relayed more than 1,560 messages to parents.

"In order for the program to work, the runaways' location will not be discussed or given to parents or police without the child's consent," stresses Judge.

The program's function is to ease the minds of parents who have missing children.

The Governor says the state's only expense will be for advertising and promotional material which the Montana Jaycees will distribute.

A Montana billboard firm plans to display at its own expense 35 posters saying: "Are you still alive? Let Somebody Know. Phone: 800-231-6946.

You call us. We'll call them."

Messengers at this toll-free number will relay communications to families throughout the country.

**Operation  
Peace of Mind  
800-231-6946**

# Help Fill Needs of Aged SRS Nutrition Programs

Lack of proper nutrition is one of the serious problems facing the elderly in Montana.

Mary Feuersinger, nutritionist for the Aging Services Bureau, Social and Rehabilitation Services, uses fictitious names to personalize some of the reasons for the problem:

Mrs. Albert, a widow, hates to eat by herself. Since her husband died, she has been alone except for occasional visits from her children. She enjoyed cooking for her husband. Now that she is alone, she seldom fixes herself a complete meal. She snacks on toast and coffee for breakfast, skips lunch and may make a sandwich in the evening.

Since John Sweet's wife died, he eats his meals at a local diner. His wife did all of the cooking (she was an excellent cook) and John used to brag, "I can't even boil water". Now he doesn't know how to buy or prepare the food he needs to maintain good health. Eating out all the time is expensive and not very appealing as a steady diet.

Mr. Applesmith was recently told by his doctor that he has diabetes and needs to follow a special diet. The physician gave Mr. Apple-

smith the printed diet, but he and his wife do not understand the list of acceptable foods and are afraid to ask the doctor questions. They are concerned that they are not following instructions the way they should.

Mrs. Wayfarer has severe crippling arthritis. A friend advised her to take an expensive vitamin supplement. She spends a large part of her small income on the vitamins hoping for relief. She has little money to buy the food she needs.

"With spiraling inflation," says Mrs. Feuersinger, "many of Montana's older citizens are finding it more and more difficult to provide themselves with adequate food and the necessities of life. They frequently do not recognize their needs for nutritionally adequate meals. Some are misled by food fads. Others continue to purchase and prepare only those foods which they are accustomed to eating. About a third require some kind of modified diet to prevent or control a chronic disease.

"Most people," she continues, "do not like to eat alone so many older people may not cook for themselves. With little activity,

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# Nutrition Programs

(Cont. from page 13)

nothing to look forward to, they lead a solitary existence. Socially isolated persons need special persuasion and inducements to participate in any group activity".

To combat the problem of poor nutrition among Montana's senior citizens, in-home and group dining programs are being put into operation with the assistance of the Aging Services Bureau.

"Meals-on-Wheels" is the in-home feeding program. Through this program, one hot meal a day is delivered to senior citizens who are unable to get to a communal site. Not only is the person receiving the food able to look forward to a good meal; he or she also can anticipate a visit by someone every day. Loneliness, it has been found, is a large contributor to poor nutrition.

Group dining allows senior citizens to be served a meal at a congregate site. Not only do people dining there receive a nutritious meal, but they also can socialize and, if they're interested, take part in group activities following.

Several feeding programs, notes Mrs. Feuersinger, are in operation in Montana. Financing comes from local charities, contributions or minimal fees from recipients, federal participation under Titles III and VII of the Older Americans Act, church budgets and state funds.

Title VII project directors in Montana are: Joyce Freeman, Billings Senior Nutrition Program; Bill Sullivan, Butte

Senior Citizen Dinner Club; Muriel Wild, Helena Daily Dinner Club; Evelyn Havskjold, Hill County Senior Nutrition Program, and Barbara Ferretti, Deer Lodge County Nutrition Program.

One of the significant aspects of the two dining programs is that often other serious problems surface in addition to poor nutrition. Some of them, as Mrs. Feuersinger points out, are lack of transportation, loneliness, faulty cooking and electrical equipment, untreated health problems and physical and mental disabilities.

As Mrs. Feuersinger explains, "A new Title VII (Public Law) of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, established the nutrition program for the elderly. The statute, signed by the President on March 22, 1972, authorized allotments on a formula basis nationwide. The allotments provide up to 90 per cent of the costs of establishing and operating nutrition projects which furnish low-cost, nutritionally sound meals to persons age 60 and over and to their spouses, regardless of age.

"Montana, with about 100,000 persons over the age of 60, has been able to provide meals through Title VII to about one-tenth of this population segment or about 1,000 persons daily," Mrs. Feuersinger adds.

# Study Groups Ask the Help Of All Citizens

As states throughout the nation prepare to observe the country's bicentennial, Montana finds itself in the unique role of putting to work the actual spirit of 1776.

As is pointed out by James Lopach and Peter Koehn, writers for the Bureau of Government Research, University of Montana:

"The war of independence was a victory for self-determination of the American colonies. The Montana review of local government is a time for local residents to adjust the structure and powers of their local government to the particular problems and needs of their own area. Montanans can proudly say that their state will be applying the spirit of 1776 in 1976 when voters of each Montana community pass on their form of local government or an alternative."

Social services and health are among the essential areas of service provided by local governments that will be scrutinized under various forms of government.

In the November elections, voters of Montana chose local government study commissioners. Commissioners began their meetings that month. All commission meetings are open to the public. Public hearings and forums will allow citizens to voice their opinions on the way

(Cont. on page 16)

## Toll-Free Number

**1-800-332-2272**

for information pertaining  
to Montana's Senior Citizens

# Food Stamps Going Unclaimed?

The Montana State Low Income Organization says that food stamps are being claimed by only 26 per cent of eligible Montana residents.

MSLIO has proposed word-of-mouth and informational meeting campaigns to spread word of availability of the federally funded food stamp program.

Steve Goldstein, a spokesman for MSLIO, says thousands of persons in Montana are failing to receive the food benefits and that businesses are losing money on unclaimed purchasing power.

Goldstein says many low-income persons are unaware of how to claim food stamps.

At the same time, an investigation of the federal food stamp program and possible abuses of it was begun in July by the Government Accounting Office. It expects to have completed its examination of the program by July of 1975 at which time public disclosure of the results will be made.

## Sample Food Coupons



*THIS is what food stamps look like. These are only samples. They are not negotiable.*

## YD Bureau Hires Workers

Two youth development workers have been hired by the Youth Development Bureau to replace staff members who have returned to school.

Marvel Weggenman replaces John Wilkinson in Helena, and Ray Jergeson replaces Barbara Koser in Great Falls. Wilkinson is continuing his education at Denver University and Koser at the University of Oregon.

Youth development workers serve as community organizers to further improve the Youth Services System, a coordinated, cooperative endeavor by communities' youth-serving agencies to deliver better services to young people. They are hired under an unusual process which involves local agencies as well as the Youth Development Bureau.

Weggenman was hired by

YDB with the cooperation of many of the Helena agencies with which she will be working. People from these agencies were part of the interviewing process and made recommendations as to whom they would like to see hired.

Jergeson was hired under contract with the Great Falls city manager's office. His immediate

(Cont. on page 16)

**Support**

(Cont. from page 3)

Under law, SRS has the authority to turn over cases of suspected fraud and non-support to the Department of Revenue for investigation and prosecution.

The departments' authority was further strengthened by a subrogation law, effective July 1974, allowing SRS to assume the rights of one parent to sue the other for payment of a child's support.

According to Theodore Carkulis and William Groff, directors of SRS and the Department of Revenue; Jack Carlson, administrator of the Economic Assistance Division of SRS, and the legal and investigative staffs of both departments, a forceful attempt is being made to reduce the instances of non-support and the cases of both inadvertent and intentional fraud. County attorneys also may investigate and prosecute such cases.

Currently, the Department of Revenue is working on 1,064 cases, referred from SRS, in which illegality involving public assistance or child support is suspected. Of these, 941 involve failure to make child-support payments. Several cases presently are under prosecution by the state's county attorneys.

**Hires Workers**

(Cont. from page 15)

supervision comes from Action City, a planning agency for that city's human services programs. Representatives from Action City, the city of Great Falls and local youth-serving agencies were part of his interviewing and hiring process.

**Local Govt. Study**

(Cont. from page 14)

their locality might be most efficiently governed.

Among the other areas that will be hashed over in relation to local government are fire and police protection, building and land-use regulation, water provision and road construction and maintenance.

Goals of the study commissions, with the public's assistance, will be to suggest to the voters the forms of government that will provide 1) the highest quality services and services delivery, 2) the most economical operations and the greatest possibilities for expansion of revenues, 3) utmost accountability of local officials to the people, 4) a strong sense of community and 5) a redistribution of power, if necessary.

Local news media will keep Montanans notified of times and places of meetings, forums and hearings.

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**Allotments Increased**

Food stamp allotment for a family of four will increase January 1, from \$150 to \$154, based on August food price statistics, according to an announcement by Under Secretary of Agriculture J. Phil Campbell.

The Food Stamp Act, as amended by the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-86), requires that coupon allotments be adjusted semi-annually to reflect changes in the prices of food as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.


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